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Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture,
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Insurance

CHRIS J. ROY, JR.
State Representative ~ District 25

May 16, 2011

Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW
Washington, DC 20554-0005

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I recently learned the Federal Communications Commission is considering shifting funding for rural phone cellular systems to broadband internet service and would like to share some thoughts and comments on the proposal. As a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives, I am attentive to issues affecting rural Louisianans, particularly with regard to public services such as telecommunications.

Nearly all of Rapides Parish and a small portion of Vernon Parish comprise my district. Parts of the United States Army's Fort Polk as well as Louisiana State University at Alexandria are in my district.

Local and regional carriers are presently providing vital coverage and may not be able to maintain cellular systems in rural, central Louisiana without the critically important financial support from the Universal Services Fund.

As a life-long resident of my district, I am personally familiar with the difficulties folks living in rural Louisiana have in obtaining good telecommunications services. I am also keenly aware that regional and local cellular carriers have been providing much-needed coverage to rural areas through critical financial support from the Universal Services Fund. Any reduction in that assistance could be detrimental to rural populations from both a public safety and an economic development perspective.

I ask that you review alternatives to accomplishing your goal of expanding internet service without negatively affecting the existing telecommunication systems in rural areas. I would be glad to provide further information should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chris J. Roy, Jr.", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Chris J. Roy, Jr.

cc: Michael J. Copps, Commissioner
Robert McDowell, Commissioner
Mignon Clyburn, Commissioner
Meredith Attwell Baker, Commissioner
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary